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The development and testing of textual analysis procedures using Mexican-Spanish and Papago texts as a phase of a study of method in language and culture research are described in this research report. These procedures, which are designed to allow the examination of informational structure and cognitive content, (1) segment uniformized texts into informant-delimited sentences, (2) define informational statements, (3) determine the lexical composition of informational statements, and (4) determine the cultural classification of terms. Changes in the original research design are enumerated, and a textual sample with analysis is provided. Some remarks are offered on the significance of this research to the teaching of reading comprehension. (AF)

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A STUDY OF METHOD IN LANGUAGE-AND-CULTURE RESEARCH

PHASE II: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

September 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
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F I N A L R E P O R T

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is a report on research accomplished during two years of work under contract No. OEC-0-8-062864-0230(014) at San Fernando Valley State College. This research is to be completed at the State University of New York at Buffalo under a new contract for which a proposal is now pending.

As stated in the Interim Report of October, 1968, work in the first year of the project was concerned primarily with developing a research strategy. In the course of so doing it was found that the original research plans were inadequate in two respects. Accordingly, they were revised as follows: (1) Instead of using data and informants from a single language, it was decided to use data and informants from several languages. (2) Instead of spending the first year exclusively on the preparation of the data base and the second year exclusively on the development of a definitive methodology, it was decided to combine the two and spread the joint tasks over the first two project years.

Work in the second year was concerned primarily with the implementation of the revised research plans.

The reasons for the changes in the original research plans, as well as the technical details regarding the results achieved during the project are presented in section 2. Finally, some attention has been given to the educational implications of this research. Some conclusions are presented in section 3.

2. Technical Discussion

This section is concerned with the original research plans, the changes in them, the justification for these changes, and the extent to which the revised plans have been implemented.

2.1 Summary of Original Research Plans

As stated in the proposal (see section 1.2.) the research was to be conducted on the language of a single speech community, namely, that of the Papago Indian tribe of Arizona and Sonora (Mexico). As further stated in the proposal (see sections 4.1. and 4.2.) the first year was supposed to be concerned with the preparation of the data base for cognitive analysis; the second year, with the development of a definitive methodology for the cognitive analysis of the data base. The preparation of the data base for cognitive analysis was to entail (1) the transcription--or retranscription--, (2) the linguistic analysis, and (3) the classification in terms of genres, of the extensive body of Papago texts that the Principal Investigator has at her disposal. Out of these texts a sample was to be selected to constitute the data base. During the second year, the development of a definitive methodology for the cognitive analysis of the data base was to be achieved by means of a series of approximations, each of which was to be tested on the data base.

2.2. Changes in Original Research Plans and Justification

All the changes made in the original research plans are interrelated and motivated by methodological considerations. These changes concern both the data base and the division of the research into stages.

2.2.1. Changes Involving Data Base

In the course of the work, it became increasingly apparent that the performance of behavioral tests--which is central to the method developed in this research (see section 2.3.3. below)-- is closely dependent upon the cultural background of the native speakers used as informants. In order to achieve the desired generality in the method, it was therefore considered essential to investigate the application of behavioral tests under different conditions of cultural background. Consequently, data from more than one speech community were selected. In order to keep the study within manageable bounds it was decided to limit the number of genres to be investigated: instead of many genres in a single language, a few genres in several languages.

2.2.2. Changes Involving Research Stages

As was noted in the Interim Report, the first approximation of a procedure for the analysis of textual data was reached significantly ahead of schedule. It became apparent that the research could be conducted more efficiently if these methodological advances could be followed up immediately rather than waiting. The previously mentioned combination of the first two stages of the research (see section 1, above) was therefore decided upon and partially implemented.

2.3. Results Achieved

In addition to data and informants from Papago, data and informants from the following speech communities were used: Hiligaynon and Ilocano (Philippines), American English, and Mexican Spanish.

Individual sentences were used primarily to develop behavioral tests. Continuous texts were used primarily to apply the behavioral tests and to develop and apply the other aspects of the method.

In the beginning of the work a significant number of Papago texts of various genres (7 myths, 5 animal tales, 1 fairy tale and 3 autobiographies) were transcribed and made ready for preliminary analysis. In addition, a number of Mexican Spanish tests were collected on tape and transcribed (1 autobiography and 4 fairy tales). For purposes of cognitive analysis it was decided to use texts belonging to three genres only: two folkloric; namely, fairy tales and animal tales; one non-folkloric, namely, autobiographies. The hypothesis was that all three of these genres are likely to reveal significant cognitive aspects of the culture. Fairy tales and animal tales are likely to reveal foci of the imaginative interests of the culture. Autobiographies are likely to reveal those aspects of the culture which have had the greatest impact on the lives of the informants.

2.3.2. Research Goals and Analytic Stages

As stated in the Interim Report, the distinction between semantic content and cognitive significance of a text, which is central to the theoretical frame of reference of the research, was retained. The fundamental assumption that the knowledge of the structure of the semantic content of the text will lead to the uncovering of the cognitive significance of that text, i.e., its message, was also retained (see Proposal, Attachment II, section 1.1. and Abstract). A terminological change was introduced regarding the structure of the semantic content of a text. Instead of the term 'structure of the story' (see Proposal, section 2.2.), the term 'informational

structure of the text' is now used. This term was chosen to underline the difference between this type of structure and the grammatical structure. The informational structure of a text is here conceived of as being independent of the grammatical structure, i.e., independent both of the morphology and of the syntax. This means that in order to extract the informational structure of a text, no requirement is made to preserve the actual phrasing of that text. In line with the terminological change described above, the two main goals included in the cognitive analysis of a text can be rephrased as follows: (1) the uncovering of the informational structure of the text; (2) the uncovering of the message of the text.

During the first project year, the initial analytic stages pertaining to the first of these two goals were specified in detail. During the second project year, detailed procedures were developed for the implementation of these stages. The analytic stages pertaining to the uncovering of the informational structure of a text are as follows:

I. Determination of behavioral and analytic textual units
   (1) Segmentation of the text into minimal behavioral units, informant-delimited sentences, and nonminimal behavioral units (e.g., episodes, etc...)
   (2) Definition of the minimal analytic textual units, the informational statements

II. Classification of informational statements on the basis of their lexical composition
   (1) Terms within informational statements
   (2) Lexical internal structure of terms

(3) Classification of terms by the culture

III. Distribution of informational statements within nonminimal behavioral units

IV. Definition of nonminimal analytic units

The above analytic stages reflect the principal investigator's conception of structure and of the operational means for uncovering it.

Structure is conceived in terms of units, both minimal and nonminimal, and their relations.

The operational means for uncovering units and their relations consist of an ordered sequence of steps employing appropriate behavioral techniques. This sequence of steps is determined by two key considerations: (1) the transition from behavioral to analytic units and (2) the classification of units, both in paradigmatic and in syntamagtic terms.

2.3.3. Procedures

It has been found that the analytic procedures developed are readily applicable only to the narrative discourse for which they are intended. Therefore, direct conversational speech which is often found inserted into narrative passages must be transposed into indirect speech in order for the text to be uniformly narrative. This is done by requesting the informant to rephrase direct speech into indirect speech. No problem was encountered in the performance of this preliminary step. It is called uniformization of the text. It is illustrated in the Appendix.

In the course of the research, procedures for the following four types of analytic operations have been developed and tested on the Mexican Spanish texts: (1) procedure for segmenting the uniformized text into informant-delimited sentences; (2) procedure for defining operationally the

minimal analytic textual units, namely, the informational statements; (3) procedure for determining the lexical composition of informational statements, i.e. what terms they contain; (4) procedure for determining the way in which terms are classified by the culture.

In addition to these procedures, the procedure for determining the lexical internal structure of terms (i.e. naming units and other lexical behavioral units) that was developed in the first phase of the present research has been found adequate. It has been integrated into the procedures currently under development.

The four procedures that have been developed in the current phase of the research will now be described in some detail. They are illustrated in the Appendix.

2.3.3.1. Procedure for Segmenting the Text Into Informant-Delimited Sentences

This procedure consists essentially in eliciting from informants "natural" breaks in the continuity of the narrative. This was done by asking the informant at what points he or she could interrupt the narration, or pause briefly, in order to take a break, a drink of water, etc. It was observed that the ease with which narratives can be interrupted varies from culture to culture and depends on the nature of the narrative.

2.3.3.2. Procedure for Defining Informational Statements

This procedure consists of three steps: (a) from informant-delimited sentences to informant-explicated sentences; (b) from informant-explicated sentences to independent statements; (c) from independent statements to informational statements.

These three steps serve to establish the transition from the syntax-dependent sentence to the syntax-independent elements of information contained in the sentence (see section 2.3.2., above). The three steps will now be

described briefly.

2.3.3.2.1. From Informant-Delimited Sentences to Informant-Explicated Sentences

This step consists in requesting the informant to rephrase the sentences of the text in such a way that whatever was implicit in the original sentences is now rendered as explicit as possible. This means, among others, replacing all anaphoric expressions by their antecedents, overtly stating implicit sentence portions such as objects of verbs (direct and/or indirect), etc.

2.3.3.2.2. From Informant-Explicated Sentences to Independent Statements

In this step the analyst guides the informant in rephrasing the informant-explicated sentences into the maximum possible number of independent short statements.

In essence, the resultant independent statements consist of the predicate verb, its subject, and those of its dependents that are mandatory from a lexical standpoint. By the latter are meant the dependents that serve to define a given verb as one lexical unit, rather than another. The technique of folk definition is used to determine what dependents belong to a given lexical unit. Thus, when the informant was asked to define "bañar", the following folk definition was given: "Es cubrirlo de agua--o de algún líquido--a que se moje todo". On the basis of this folk definition it was decided that the lexical unit included the following elements: "bañar alguien/algo de/con un líquido". When the informant was asked to define "bañarse", the following folk definition was given: "Es tomar un baño para lavar el cuerpo". On the basis of this folk definition it was decided that the lexical unit included only the element "bañarse".

As a result of this step, the original text is divided into two sets of elements: (1) those which are absorbed into the independent statements; (2) those which remain as residues. An examination of the residues reveals that they consist primarily of conjunctions and temporal adverbs. These are considered the elements which link the individual independent statements to each other. They are therefore called linkages. For examples of linkages, see the Appendix.

2.3.3.2.3. From Independent Statements to Informational Statements.

In this step, the omission test is applied to determine what portions of an independent statement can be left out without changing its basic meaning. The omitted portions are considered adjuncts. The remaining basic portion of the independent statement is considered the informational statement. The sameness of basic meaning is determined by asking the informant for his opinion, and interpreting his responses. For examples of informational statements and of adjuncts, see the Appendix.

2.3.3.3. Procedure for Determining the Lexical Composition of Informational Statements.

The aim of this step is to analyze each informational statement into its component lexical units. The technique by which this is achieved is employment of the minimal response test. This consists of the following: For each informational statement, the informant is requested to phrase the maximum possible number of direct questions, the information for answering which is in its entirety contained in the informational statement in question. Thus, given the informational statement "John went to town", the question "Why did he go to town?" would not be admissible in this context because

the information required to answer this question is not contained in the informational statement in question. Admissible questions are: 1. "Who went to town"; 2. "What did John do?"; 3. "Where did John go?".

For each direct question, the informant is requested to give the shortest possible answer. This is called the minimal response. Using the above example, the following would be the minimal responses to the three questions suggested by it: 1. "John"; 2. "went to town", or "he went to town"; and 3. "to town".

Minimal responses are assumed to correspond to the component lexical units of the informational statement.

2.3.3.4. Procedure for Determining the Cultural Classification of Terms

It is assumed that the various admissible questions referred to in the preceding section represent culturally relevant types of phenomena, such as various categories of entities, actions, events, etc.

Consequently, some admissible questions can serve as criteria for the classification of the lexical units that constitute the minimal responses to them. Thus, in the above example, "John" represents a "who"-type lexical unit, i.e. a "human" entity; "went to town" :
represents a "what did -- do"-type lexical unit, i.e. an action; "to town" represents a "where"-type lexical unit, i.e. a location.

Because of the anticipated complexity of the classificatory system of the lexical units with predicative function, these were given first attention in the analysis of the Mexican Spanish texts. The following four major classes of lexical units with predicative function were uncovered: (1) actions (corresponding only to the question "¿Y que hizo --?"); (2) events (corresponding only to the questions "¿Y que pasó con--?" or "¿Y que ocurrió con--?";
(3) action-events (corresponding

equally to the questions " Y que hizo --?" and " Y que pasó con--?" or " Que ocurrió con--?") (4) miscellaneous predications (corresponding to none of the above questions but rather to a great number of very specific questions as shown below). An example of an action is: "ofrecer algo a alguien". An example of an event is: "quedarse en/dentro de un lugar". An example of an action/event is: "cansarse". Examples of miscellaneous predications are given further below.

These four classes fall into two major categories: (1) those that correspond to general questions (namely, actions, events, and action-events) and (2) those that correspond to specific questions (namely, miscellaneous predications). It is to be noticed that the latter can be further subdivided into a great many subclasses on the basis of the many questions to which they correspond. An illustrative listing of these questions is the following:

"¿Y como es --?", as in the question:"¿Y como es Galdiana?", with its answer: "inteligente";

"¿Y como está --?" as in the question: "¿Y como estaba la puerta?" with its answer: "cerrada";

"¿Y como está/se ve --?", as in the question: "¿Y como estaban/se veían las puertas?", with its answer: "marcadas";

"¿Y como se llama --?", as in the question: "¿Y como se llamaba el hermano de Olibaba?", with its answer: "Casín";

"¿Y qué clase de -- es?", as in the question: "¿Y qué clase de olla era?", with its answer: "era de fierro";

"¿Y qué carácter tiene --?", as in the question: "¿Y qué carácter tenía la mujer de Casín?", with its answer: "era envidiosa";

"¿Y qué facciones tiene --?", as in the question: "¿Y qué facciones tenía Galdiana?", with its answer: "era guapa";

"¿Y en qué posesión/situación está/vive --?", as in the question: "¿Y en qué posesión está el hermano de Olibaba?", with its answer: "es millonario";
"¿Y de qué color es --?", as in the question: "¿Y de qué color era el vestido de Galdiana?", with its answer: "era blanco".
"¿Y qué horas son ya?", as in the question: "¿Y qué horas eran ya?", with its answer: "el sol se estaba metiendo";
"¿Y quien es --?" as in the question: "¿Y Galdiana quien era?", with its answer: "la sirvienta de Casín";
"¿Y qué cantidad de -- hay?", as in the question: "¿Y qué cantidad de leña había?", with its answer: "habia un montón de leña".

At present writing two significant observations can be made in regard to the cultural classification of lexical units.

The first of these is that contrary to the commonly held assumption of the homogeneity of such classifications, (i.e., all classes are equally broad, e.g. entities, actions, events, qualities), the classification uncovered for Mexican Spanish suggests no such homogeneity, as shown by the very general as opposed to very specific classes discussed above. The second observation is that both the classification and the assignment of individual lexical units to particular classes may be culture-specific. In order to demonstrate the culture-specificity of classifications, a detailed comparative study is required. The culture-specificity of the assignment of individual lexical units to particular classes can be illustrated by a striking example contrasting American English with Mexican Spanish usuage: "despertar" "to wake up" is an event in Mexican Spanish and appears to be an action in American English.

2.3.4. Theoretical Considerations

From a theoretical point of view, the two most important characteristics of the research reported on herein are the following: (1) the strong

orientation towards behavioral techniques; (2) the differentiation between the semantic and cognitive domains of language, corresponding to two consecutive levels of analysis.

These two considerations constitute the most striking differences between the research conducted under the present contract and other approaches to textual analysis, such as Harris' discourse analysis or the structural analysis of narrative as practiced by Lévi-Strauss and his followers.

These theoretical questions are discussed in some detail in two forthcoming papers by the Principal Investigator. The first of these is "Theory-Building in the Descriptive Approach", to appear in "Method and Theory in Linguistics", edited by Paul L. Garvin, to be published by Mouton & Co. A copy of this paper was included as an Appendix to the Interim Report. The second is "The Semantic and Cognitive Domains of Language" to appear in "Cognition--A Multiple View", edited by Paul L. Garvin, to be published by Spartan Books.

3. Education Significance of the Present Project

As was noted in the Interim Report, the importance of the current research from an educational point of view was clarified in discussions with educators (such as members of the Project LINGUA Advisory Board, Los Angeles, California, and of the Prospective Teacher Graduate Fellowship Project at San Ferando Valley State College). As a result of these and later discussions, it was determined that the type of textual analysis discussed herein is likely to lead to findings significant particularly in the area of reading comprehension. Educators are becoming increasingly aware of the significance of cognitive factors in the comprehension of reading matter by early readers. This is coupled with an awareness that the teaching of syntax

is inadequate as a means to promote comprehension. These considerations agree with the basic philosophy of this research that informational structure and cognitive content are essentially independent of syntax. It is therefore expected that a proper understanding of the informational and cognitive structures of text will provide some important tools for the introduction of cognitive factors into the teaching of reading comprehension. At present, it is felt that particularly the lower levels of the analysis pertaining to the informational structure of text are directly relevant to the educational task. It is also felt that some of the behavioral research techniques (such as the question-phrasing, completion and other tests) can be appropriately modified by qualified educational scientists to serve as techniques for the teaching of reading comprehension.

A P P E N D I X

TEXTUAL SAMPLE WITH ANALYSIS

SAMPLE OF RECORDED TEXT WITH ANALYST-DELIMITED SENTENCES

...Se vino Casín a su casa y él tenía mulas. Aparejó sus mulas y se fue ya metiéndose el sol. Pensaba que lo iba a agarrar la noche pero dijo: "¡No importa, no hay que dejar para otro día! Voy en busca de esa cueva." Y la encontró y llegó y dejó sus mulas en la puerta de la cueva y dice: "¡Cesé, ábrete!" Se abrió la cueva. Llegó y para pronto llenó sus costales y los amarró, pero se le olvidó la segunda palabra para que se abriera la cueva...

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Casín got to his house and he had mules. He packed up his mules. And he left when the sun was already setting. He thought that night would overtake him, but he said, "It does not matter! It won't do to leave it for another day. I am going to look for this cave." And he found it and he arrived there and he left his mules at the entrance to the cave and he says: "Here I am, open up!" The cave opened. He went in and in no time he filled his sacks and he tied them, but he had forgotten what the second word was for the cave to open.

UNIFORMIZED TEXT WITH NUMBERED INFORMANT-DELIMITED SENTENCES

[Sentence 55]

Se vino Casín a su casa y él tenía mulas.

[Sentence 56]

Aparejó sus mulas y se fue ya metiéndose el sol.

[Sentence 57]

Pensaba que lo iba a agarrar la noche pero decidió que no importaba que camine de noche.

[Sentence 58]

Decidió ir en busca de esa cueva sin dar mas treguas.

[Sentence 59]

Y la encontró.

[Sentence 60]

Llegó y dejó sus mulas en la puerta de la cueva diciendo que él había cesado, que se abriera la cueva.

[Sentence 61]

Se abrió la cueva.

[Sentence 62]

Llegó y para pronto llenó sus costales y los amarró pero se le olvidó la segunda palabra para que se abriera la cueva.

INFORMANT-EXPLICATED SENTENCES

(Underlined portions indicate changes made in recorded text.)

[Sentence 55]

Casín se vino a su (= de Casín) casa y Casín tenía mulas.

[Sentence 56]

Casín aparejó sus (= de Casín) mulas y Casín se fue de casa cuando ya el sol se estaba metiendo.

[Sentence 57]

Casín pensaba que la noche lo (= a Casín) iba a agarrar pero Casín decidió que no importaba que (Casín) camine de noche.

[Sentence 58]

Casín decidió ir en busca de esa cueva sin dar mas treguas.

[Sentence 59]

Y Casín encontró la cueva.

[Sentence 60]

Y Casín llegó a la cueva y Casín dejó sus (= de Casín) mulas en la puerta de la cueva.

Casín dijo que Casín había cesado a la cueva. Casín dijo que se abriera la puerta de la cueva.

[Sentence 61]

Se abrió la cueva.

[Sentence 62]

Casín entró dentro de la cueva y para pronto Casín llenó sus (= de Casín) costales de monedas y Casín amarró los costales pero se le olvidó a Casín la segunda palabra que había de decir para que se abriera la cueva.

INDEPENDENT STATEMENTS AND LINKAGES

LINKAGES	INDEPENDENT STATEMENTS
	[Sentence 55]
	1. Casín se vino a su (= de Casín) casa.
y	2. Casín tenía mulas.
	[Sentence 56]
	1. Casín aparejó sus (= de Casín) mulas.
y	2. Casín se fue de casa.
cuando ya	3. El sol se estaba metiendo.
	[Sentence 57]
	1. Casín pensaba que la noche lo (= a Casín) iba a agarrar.
pero	2. Casín decidió que no importaba que (Casín) camine de noche.
	[Sentence 58]
	1. Casín decidió ir en busca de esa cueva.
y	2. Casín decidió no dar mas treguas.
y	[Sentence 59]
	Casín encontró la cueva.
	[Sentence 60]
	1. Casín llegó a la cueva.
	2. Casín dejó sus (= de Casín) mulas en la puerta de la cueva.
	3. Casín dijo que (Casín) había cesado a la cueva.
	4. Casín dijo que se abriera la puerta de la cueva.
	[Sentence 61]
	Se abrió la cueva.

INDEPENDENT STATEMENTS AND LINKAGES

LINKAGES	INDEPENDENT STATEMENTS
	[Sentence 62]
	1. Casín entró dentro de la cueva.
y	2. Casín llenó sus costales de monedas.
y	3. Casín amarró los costales.
pero	4. Se le olvidó a Casín una palabra.
	5. La palabra era la que había de decir para que se abriera la cueva.
	6. Era la segunda palabra.

INFORMATIONAL STATEMENTS AND ADJUNCTS

(The latter are indicated by placement in brackets.)

55.1. Casín se vino a su (= de Casín) casa.

55.2. Casín tenía mulas.

56.1. Casín aparejó sus (= de Casín) mulas.

56.2. Casín se fue de casa.

56.3. El sol se estaba metiendo.

57.1. Casín pensaba que la noche lo (= a Casín) iba a agarrar.

57.2. Casín decidió que no importaba que (Casín) camine de noche.

58.1. Casín decidió ir en busca de esa cueva.

58.2. Casín decidió no dar mas treguas.

59.1. Casín encontró la cueva.

60.1. Casín llegó a la cueva.

60.2. Casín dejó sus (= de Casín) mulas en la puerta de la cueva.

60.3. Casín dijo que (Casín) había cesado a la cueva.

60.4. Casín dijo que se abriera la puerta de la cueva.

61.1. Se abrió la cueva.

62.1. Casín entró dentro de la cueva.

62.2. [para pronto] Casín llenó sus costales de monedas.

62.3. Casín amarró los costales.

62.4. Se le olvidó a Casín una palabra.

62.5. Era la segunda palabra.

62.6. La palabra era para que se abriera la cueva.